

Tom Horne
Superintendent

N.E.W.S

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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HORNE ISSUES STATEMENT ON *AIMS* LAWSUIT FILED TODAY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Tuesday, April 18, 2006

PHOENIX (Tuesday, April 18, 2006) -- State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Horne today issued the following statement in response to a lawsuit regarding the AIMS test filed today by the Center for Law in the Public Interest:

“Social promotion is a disease that has infected public education for too many years. In order to avoid hurting students feelings, students were promoted from grade-to-grade whether they learned anything or not, and were given diplomas whether they learned anything or not. Because students knew they would be promoted and given diplomas whether or not they paid attention in class or did their homework, learning plummeted. The public, discovering that high school graduates lacked basic skills, reacted, and their elected representatives established the requirement that students must pass a reasonable test to graduate. As a result, students are studying much harder and learning more of the skills they will need to survive in today’s economy.

“As usual, the so-called ‘Center for Law in the Public Interest’ wants to get the judiciary to contradict the will of the people through their representatives. This time, it wants to reinstitute social promotion. When proposals for dual diplomas were introduced into the public debate, the most panicked calls I received were from principals in neighborhoods with high concentrations of poverty and English language learners. They told me: students in wealthy areas would often be pushed by their parents to study regardless. But many students in the more challenging neighborhoods would reduce the intensive efforts that they had been making, if they knew they could graduate without passing a test. Once again, the so-called ‘Center for Law in the Public Interest’ is trying to have judges impose policies that will hurt the very people it claims to represent.

“We will use every ounce of effort to beat back this attempt to reverse our hard-won gains in student learning.”

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EDITORS / ASSIGNMENT EDITORS:

Superintendent Horne will be available for in-office interviews or by telephone at 2:30 PM today, Tuesday, April 18, 2006. The office is located at 1535 W. Jefferson St., 4th Floor, Phoenix.

